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## 6 LEADERSHIP STYLES

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*Robyn Benincasa is a two-time Adventure Racing World Champion, two-time Guinness World Record distance kayaker, a full-time firefighter, and author of the new book, HOW WINNING WORKS: 8 Essential Leadership Lessons from the Toughest Teams on Earth (<http://www.robynbenincasa.com/>), from which the following article is excerpted. (Harlequin Nonfiction, June 2012). Read more of Robyn's article [here](http://www.fastcompany.com/1838481/6-leadership-styles-and-when-you-should-use-them) (<http://www.fastcompany.com/1838481/6-leadership-styles-and-when-you-should-use-them>).*

There are six leadership styles that Daniel Goleman, author of *Leadership That Gets Results*, uncovered among the managers he studied (2000 *Harvard Business Review* study), as well as a brief analysis of the effects of each style on the corporate climate:

### **The pacesetter leader**

This person expects and models excellence and self-direction. If this style were summed up in one phrase, it would be “Do as I do, now.” The pacesetter style works best when the team is

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already motivated and skilled, and the leader needs quick results. Used extensively, however, this style can overwhelm team members and squelch innovation.

### **The authoritative leader**

A leader of this type mobilizes the team toward a common vision and focuses on end goals, leaving the means up to each individual. If this style were summed up in one phrase, it would be "Come with me." The authoritative style works best when the team needs a new vision because circumstances have changed, or when explicit guidance is not required.

Authoritative leaders inspire an entrepreneurial spirit and vibrant enthusiasm for the mission. It is not the best fit when the leader is working with a team of experts who know more than him or her.

### **The affiliative leader**

This type of leader works to create emotional bonds that bring a feeling of bonding and belonging to the organization. If this style were summed up in one phrase, it would be "People come first." The affiliative style works best in times of stress, when teammates need to heal from a trauma, or when the team needs to rebuild trust. This style should not be used exclusively, because a sole reliance on praise and nurturing can foster mediocre performance and a lack of direction.

### **The coaching leader**

This is someone who develops people for the future. If this style were summed up in one phrase, it would be "Try this." The coaching style works best when the leader wants to help teammates build lasting personal strengths that make them more successful overall. It is least effective when teammates are defiant and unwilling to change or learn, or if the leader lacks proficiency.

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## The coercive leader

This is the person who demands immediate compliance. If this style were summed up in one phrase, it would be “Do what I tell you.” The coercive style is most effective in times of crisis, such as in a company turnaround or a takeover attempt, or during an actual emergency like a tornado or a fire. This style can also help control a problem teammate when everything else has failed. However, it should be avoided in almost every other case because it can alienate people and stifle flexibility and inventiveness.

## The democratic leader

A leader like this builds consensus through participation. If this style were summed up in one phrase, it would be “What do you think?” The democratic style is most effective when the leader needs the team to buy into or have ownership of a decision, plan, or goal, or if he or she is uncertain and needs fresh ideas from qualified teammates. It is not the best choice in an emergency situation, when time is of the essence for another reason or when teammates are not informed enough to offer sufficient guidance to the leader.

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June 2, 2012



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